Vol. 4. Numb. 28.

THE REHEARSAL.

1. As the *Presbyterians* who Set up the *Scripture* againſt the *Church*, ſtick moſt to that *Command* which has leaſt of *Scripture* and moſt of *Church* Authority: So the *Quakers* who ſet up the *Spirit* againſt the *Letter* of the *Scriptures*, ſtick more Superſtitiouſly to the *Letter* than any other People in the World.
2. I return to the *Anna-Baptiſts*.
3. They own that *Infants* may be Capable of *Baptiſm*.
4. *Circumciſion* was a *Seal* of the *Goſpel Covenant*.
5. It was no *Inſtitution* of the *Law*.
6. As little Doubt of *Infant Baptiſm* as of *Infant Circumciſion*.
7. More Reaſon to Exclude *Women* than *Infants* from *Baptiſm*.
8. *Gen.* xvii. 10. with *Matt.* xxviii. 19. is a *Goſpel Precept* for *Infant Baptiſm*.
9. A further Atteſtation of our Bl. *Saviour* Himſelf, that *Circumciſion* was no *Legal* Inſtitution.

SATURDAY, *January* 15. 1708.

(1.) *Country-man.* I told you laſt time I had more to ſay upon that Head of the Merciſull Diſpoſition of *Providence*, That *Errors* often Carry their own *Confutation* in themſelves. And I remember you gave me another Inſtance beſides that of the *Presbyterians* which I mention'd laſt. I Love to Rub up my Memory, that I loſe not the Benefit of thoſe Inſtructions you have given Me. Therefore as it is Remarkable how the *Presbyterians* cut the Graſs under their own Feet, in their being ſo very Strict as to the Obſervation of the *First Day* of the *Week* (which they ſtill call the *Sabbath*) when ther is nothing for that *Day* but the Authority of the *Church*; And at the ſame time they ſet up the *Scriptures* againſt the Authority of the *Church*, as their *Foundation Principle*: So (as you told me) the *Quakers* ſet up the *Spirit* againſt the *Scriptures*; They call the *Scriptures* the *Letter*, Say they were Wrote to other People, and Bind none now, Unleſs the ſame things are Commanded *Anew* by the ſame *Spirit* that gave forth the *Scriptures*, which they ſay now Reſides in them and is their only *Rule* as to *Faith* and *Practice*, without the Help of any thing Elſe. And yet theſe Deſpiſers of the *Letter* prove to be the moſt Superſtitious *Literaliſts* and Obſervers of the *Letter* that ever were in the World, and make a *Conſcience* of the Words *Thee* and *Thou*, and ſet it up as their *Characteriſtick* to Diſtinguiſh them from all other *People!* And this is not the *Letter* of the *Original Scriptures*, but of our *Engliſh* Tranſlation. Which yet fails them, for we find *You* and *Your* given to a *Singular*, as *Job.* xviii. 2, 3. and ſeveral other Places. And the whole *People* of *Iſrael* are as oft ſpoke to in the *Singular* of *Thou* and *Thee* as in the *Plural* of *You* and *Your*.

(2.) But our Buſineſs is not now to Enter upon this Diſpute with the *Quakers*. And this is a digreſſion. I have ſomething ſtill to Ask you, as to the Point of the *Ana-Baptiſts*. I think the Anſwer you have given is ſufficient as to *Infants* not being Nam'd, more than the *Women*, in the Command to *Baptize all Nations*. For that muſt be underſtood according to the Known and Receiv'd *Notion* and *Practice* of that Age, and of the *Ages* before. And if *Infants* had been nam'd, it wou'd have look'd as if they had not been within the *Covenant* before. But yet if in the Goſpel *Infants* had been Nam'd, if you cou'd find any ſuch *Text*, it wou'd be the *Shorteſt* way indeed, and the *Cleareſt* too.

(3.) *Rehearſal.* If *Infants* are Capable of being within the *Covenant* of *Grace*, then they are Capable of Receiving the *Signs* and *Seals* of it.

Country-m. Yes. The *Ana-Baptiſts* allow this. That whoever is Capable of *Church Membership* (as they call it) is Capable of the *Signs* and *Seals* of it. Nay, an Eminent *Preacher* of theirs own'd to me, (Upon my Urgeing our *Saviour*'s Bleſſing of *Infants*, Commanding them to be brought unto Him, and ſaying that *of ſuch was the Kingdom of God.* Mark x. 14. And that *John* the *Baptiſt* was *filled with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his Mother's Womb.* And *leaped in her Womb for Joy* of the Salutation of the Bleſſed *Virgin.* Luke i. 15.44. Therefore that we cou'd not determin *How* far

far or in what Manner God might Communicate of His *Holy Spirit* to *Infants*. I ſay, upon this he own'd to me) That *Infants* might be Capable of *Baptiſm*, but in Regard that we knew not who were Capable and who not, therefore that they Gave it to None. I told him, I thought that was a better Argument to Give it to All. For how ſhou'd we *Exclude* whom *God* has not *Excluded*? He ſaid, he wou'd yield all, if ther was any ſuch *Precept* for it in the *Goſpel*. Therefore I come to you, to ſee if you can Help me in this.

(4.) *Rehearſ.* I think I can. And the *Text* I Name to you is *Gen.* xvii. 10. *This is my Covenant*, &c.

Country-m. O, *Maſter*, you forget your ſelf. It was a *Goſpel* Proof I was asking.

Rehearſ. And I have given you one. It is Call'd the *Goſpel* Preach'd to *Abraham*. Gal. iii. 8. *That in his Seed all Nations ſhou'd be Bleſſed. He ſaith not, and to Seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Chriſt.* This was the *Goſpel-Covenant*. And *Circumciſion* was then given as the *Seal* of it. And by Expreſs Command was to be Adminiſter'd to *Infants* at Eight Days Old.

(5.) *Country-m.* But they will take Nothing by way of Analogy from the *Law*. They ſay *Circumciſion* was a *Legal Inſtitution*, and therefore that we can Argue nothing from it.

Rehearſ. It was no *Legal Inſtitution*. It was *Inſtituted* 430 Years before the *Law*. And as an *Evangelical-Inſtitution*, which the *Law* cou'd not Diſanull or take away. As the *Apoſtle* argues *Gal.* iii. 17. *And this I ſay, That the Covenant which was Confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the Law which was 430 Years after, cannot Diſanull.* So that the *Goſpel-Covenant* which was before the *Law*, ſtands ſtill Good notwithſtanding of the *Law*. All the Difference is, That inſtead of the *Bloody Seal* of *Circumciſion*, *Chriſt* (who Aboliſh'd the Bloody Types) did Subſtitute that more Eaſie of *Baptiſm*. The *Seal* is Alter'd, but the *Covenant* is the ſame.

(6.) Pray, ask your *Ana-Baptiſts*, if inſtead of *Go and Baptize all Nations*, &c. it had been ſaid, Go and *Circumciſe* them, whether they wou'd have had any Scruple of Admitting *Infants*? Then let them give a Reaſon why *Infants* ſhou'd not be Admitted to *Baptiſm* as well as to *Circumciſion*, they being both *Seals* of the ſame *Covenant*, Succeeding one another at different Times?

(7.) *Country-m.* And *Baptiſm* is the more Extenſive *Seal*, for *Women* are Capable of it. Therefore they are Admitted, tho' they are not *Nam'd* in the *Commiſſion* of *Go and Baptize all Nations*. And if *Women* are *Admitted* upon the *Equity* of the *Command*, who had not the *Seal* before, becauſe they are in the *Covenant*, and therefore have a Right to the *Seal*, where it is ſuch as may be Apply'd to them: How can thoſe *Infants* be *Excluded* to whom it was Commanded to give the *Seal* before? And this ſuppoſes they were within the *Covenant*, Nay, it is Expreſly ſaid, *Gen.* xvii. 14. That the Reaſon why the *Male-Child* that was not *Circumciſed* was to be *Cut off*, was, *Becauſe he hath Broken my Covenant*. Now none can *Break* any *Covenant* who is not in it. Far leſs if he is not *Capable* of being in it. Which is the Reaſon the *Ana-Baptiſts* give for *Excluding* of *Infants*.

(8.) *Rehearſ.* And I having before ſhew'd, That this was the *Goſpel-Covenant*, and a *Goſpel-Precept*, and not a *Legal*, I think I have Satisfy'd your Demand, in giving a *Goſpel-Text* for *Infant-Baptiſm*, that is, *Gen.* xvii. 10. with the New *Seal*. Added *Matth.* xxviii. 19. Both are *Goſpel Precepts*, and *Inſtitutions* of the *Goſpel*.

Country-m. It is *Clear* and *Undenyable!* And with this I think my ſelf Party enough to Battle all the *Ana-Baptiſts* in *England*. For if they Deny *Gen.* xvii. 10. to be the *Goſpel*, they muſt Deny *Gal.* iii. 8. too, which Expreſly ſays ſo.

(9.) *Rehearſ.* And if they will not Believe St. *Paul*, that *Circumciſion* was not a *Legal* Inſtitution, let them hear *Chriſt* Himſelf who ſaid, *Joh.* vii. 22. *Moſes therefore gave unto you Circumciſion, not becauſe it is of Moſes, but of the Fathers.* It was Continu'd by *Moſes* under the *Law*, becauſe it was Enjoin'd to the *Fathers* ever ſince *Abraham*. But the *Inſtitution* was Purely *Evangelical*, and of *Faith* in *Chriſt* only, and not at all with any Reſpect to the *Law*.

Country-m. Therefore the *Covenant* into which *Infants* were Admitted by *Circumciſion*, was the ſame as now by *Baptiſm*, that is, the *Covenant* of *Grace*, the *Goſpel Covenant*, and had nothing to do with the *Law*. And *Gen.* xvii. 10. was Certainly a *Goſpel Precept*.

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